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Tuesday, 21 October 2008, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Zhang Yesui	(China)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Grauls
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Jurica
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Terzi di Sant'Agata
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

Post-conflict peacebuilding

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission (S/2008/417)

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08-56187 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Post-conflict peacebuilding

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission (S/2008/417)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Bangladesh, El Salvador, Guinea-Bissau, the Netherlands, Norway and Sierra Leone, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Yukio Takasu, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Japan.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Takasu to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2008/417, which contains the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its second session.

I now give the floor to Mr. Yukio Takasu, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu: It is my distinct honour and pleasure to present to the Council the annual report on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission (S/2008/417). The report covers the wide range of activities undertaken by the Commission during its previous session. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of members, the Commission made steady progress and produced concrete results in many areas of its work.

Maintaining peace and security is a prerequisite for successful post-conflict peacebuilding efforts. It is equally true that durable peace and a sustainable State will never be achieved without good governance, the rule of law, respect for human rights and economic recovery and development. The Peacebuilding Commission is a unique United Nations organ that addresses all those challenges in an integrated and coherent manner. It brings together all stakeholders. It formulates an integrated strategy and monitors its implementation. It garners support and mobilizes resources. The Commission is grateful to the Council for the political guidance and substantial support that it has received and that is essential in fulfilling such a role. I also believe that the Commission can in turn fulfil a useful role complementary to that of the Council.

First, the four country-specific configurations engaged in intensive work, under the strong leadership of the respective Chairs, to produce tangible results supporting national efforts. Integrated strategies were adopted for Burundi and Siena Leone, and they are now being implemented. The strategy for Guinea-Bissau was recently adopted. A field mission will visit the Central African Republic shortly to prepare for that country's strategy. The notions of national ownership, sustained partnership with the international community, mutual accountability and dialogue — in other words, a cooperative and participatory approach — have come to be the greatest assets and have added value to the Commission.

Secondly, there are many more countries in the world than those now on our agenda that are facing challenges in the post-conflict process. The Peacebuilding Commission may provide invaluable support for efforts to address these challenges by developing effective peacebuilding strategies and

policies. With that purpose in mind, the Organizational Committee conducted in-depth policy discussions on the synergy between peacekeeping and peacebuilding and the role of the private sector. The Working Group on Lessons Learned took up several topics in order to share best practices from past efforts.

Thirdly, a serious effort was made to enhance partnerships at the highest level, in particular with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the African Union and the European Union. Regular consultations with the Presidents of the Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council were established. Many outreach efforts were made by the Chairpersons and the Peacebuilding Support Office to deepen understanding regarding the specific needs of post-conflict countries and the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Building upon our achievements to date, I would like to outline four priority areas that need to be focused upon.

First, we must continue to produce tangible results on the ground. We should bring about visible impacts of direct benefit to the people in the countries under consideration. To consolidate peace, it is essential that people actually be able to see and experience signs of the arrival of peace after a ceasefire, in the form of positive changes in their livelihoods. We need to elicit the support of all stakeholders and to mobilize resources, not only from traditional partners but also by bringing in new and non-traditional partners.

In that context, the call made by the Security Council in the recent presidential statement on Guinea-Bissau (S/PRST/2008/37) for support for the implementation of its integrated strategy was very useful and appreciated. Such political support by the Council is essential if the Peacebuilding Commission is to fulfil its mandate. I hope that the Council will continue to express its strong support for the work of the Commission and the implementation of the integrated strategies.

It is crucial that the United Nations presence on the ground have the appropriate mandate and capacity to support the work of the Commission and the engagement of the national Governments concerned. The United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone is a good example. We would encourage the Council to consider that need when it reviews the mandates of relevant missions and offices.

Secondly, strategic and policy discussion must be deepened. The strategy for international peacebuilding efforts is still in its early stages of development. We must make every effort to develop policies on how to fill the gap between peacekeeping and peacebuilding and also the gap between peacebuilding and development. There is a need to promote policy guidance for effective peacebuilding efforts through discussions in the Commission. Topics such as youth employment, the role of the private sector, justice and peace and the subregional dimension may be considered. Post-conflict early recovery will be a major issue of interest, both for the Council and for the Commission in the coming months. The Commission will cooperate closely with the Secretariat in preparing the report of the Secretary-General on that subject, and early examination by the Commission will provide useful inputs to the forthcoming review in the Council.

In anticipation of the inclusion of additional countries on the agenda, the issue of the entry point for the Peacebuilding Commission is also important. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding are not mutually exclusive. We should avoid duplication of efforts, of course, but some overlap may be necessary and justified in certain cases to ensure a seamless transition. We request the Council to continue to consult closely with the Commission on the referral process.

Thirdly, partnership must be strengthened. Building upon efforts to establish strong partnerships with United Nations funds and programmes, the World Bank, the IMF, regional development banks and major bilateral players, we must continue those efforts in order to make certain that the commitment of those partners is translated into specific cooperation on the ground. We will also continue to engage actively with civil society organizations.

Fourthly, the coherence of the Peacebuilding Commission's activities must be ensured. We will continue our efforts to ensure that all parts of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture work in a coherent and coordinated manner for the sole purpose of serving people on the ground. As many Member States urged last week in the general debate of the General Assembly, the Commission will continue to

improve the efficiency of its working methods, with a clear sense of added value.

Finally, during the reporting period, the relationship between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission was well established. As Chairperson, I regularly consulted with the Presidents of the Council, and I am very grateful for that courtesy. In addition, the Chairs of the country-specific configurations were regularly invited to the relevant Council meetings. I was personally invited to open Council debates on cooperation with the African Union, security sector reform, women and peace and security, and post-conflict early recovery. Those interactions became an established practice that is beneficial to both organs.

In recent years, the Government of the Central African Republic has worked to re-establish stability throughout the country and to launch a national reconciliation process. In the international community that has engendered the hope that the situation in the Central African Republic will be stabilized in the coming years, as well as renewed trust in the political will of the country's protagonists.

National ownership has already been reflected in the identification of national priorities. We welcome the commitment of the Government to make training a crucial part of its future efforts. The process of political dialogue should be restarted and include all armed groups and political actors, so as to genuinely re-establish peace and stability throughout the whole of the country's territory. The Commission will therefore have to support the Government's efforts, on the one hand, while, on the other, the Government demonstrates true political will in order to together build lasting peace in the Central African Republic.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the leadership of Ambassador Takasu, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, who has succeeded in breathing the necessary life into the work of the Commission during the second year of its existence. I should also like to express our appreciation for the work of the Peacebuilding Support Office and to thank Ms. Carolyn McAskie for her commitment. I also wish to express our full cooperation to Ms. Jane Holl Lute, the new Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support.

Ms. DiCarlo (United States of America): I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Takasu for his leadership. I would also like to thank the Chairs of the Peacebuilding Commission's country-specific configurations, which have facilitated the Commission's work both in the field and in New York. My delegation also warmly welcomes Assistant Secretary-General Jane Holl Lute and looks forward to working with her on this important issue.

The United States strongly supports the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. No function can, or should, be more central to the work of the United Nations. Today, I would like to make three points.

First, the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, two years ago, was an important but initial response to addressing what former Secretary-General Kofi Annan called the missing middle between peacekeeping and sustainable development. While progress has been slower than we had hoped, the Commission today is delivering on its commitment to the countries on its agenda. It has facilitated the emergence of new donor partners and has spurred greater coordination and frank dialogue on the underlying causes of instability that have so often contributed to tragic relapses into conflict. We believe that the Peacebuilding Commission can ultimately play an important role in United Nations peacebuilding by helping to marshal the necessary resources during the golden hour immediately after the cessation of conflict and, subsequently, by ensuring that peacebuilding is sustainable. Therefore, the working methods of the Peacebuilding Commission need to be strengthened to make it as effective as possible. We look forward to discussing the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in early recovery as mentioned by the Secretary-General in his report.

My second point is that peacebuilding must be a central pillar of United Nations reform and a priority throughout the United Nations system. Every organ of the United Nations and every major fund and programme should take into account the crosscutting nature of peacebuilding. Peacebuilding must begin from the earliest days of humanitarian intervention, with capacity-building efforts to restore the functions of the State, the rule of law and respect for human rights. It must also be accompanied by support for the restoration of infrastructure and the rapid delivery of a peace dividend that includes work for the young and the demobilized. The Peacebuilding Commission should harness the competencies of the Security Council and the General Assembly and, through its

convening authority, seek to integrate the workings of peacekeeping, development and humanitarian intervention. It should also encourage United Nations funds and programmes, traditional and non-traditional donors, non-governmental organizations and academia to better support efforts in the field through inclusive dialogue, innovative best practices, improved coordination and, of course, enhanced financing and capacity-building.

As my final point, I should like to say that we should also keep in mind the need to address other early-recovery issues in parallel. Those include bolstering the role of special representatives of the Secretary-General with the needed authority and resources to coordinate the response of United Nations agencies and the broader international response. We will also need to revamp the Peacebuilding Fund to provide greater flexibility in selecting implementing partners and faster disbursement to immediate post-conflict situations.

The work we are all doing in the Peacebuilding Commission is critical. Building lasting and sustainable peace requires long-term focus. That is exactly why we are all here, to ensure that we keep that focus and improve our capabilities. With the right mandate, the right leadership and the right resources, the United Nations has a unique and indispensable role in helping post-conflict societies to find their footing on the path to peace and prosperity. We must resolve to develop the kind of peacebuilding capacities required to fulfil our mandate, to advance international peace and security and to improve the prospects for success in post-conflict situations.

Mr. Terzi di Sant'Agata (Italy): As I take the floor, allow me to thank Ambassador Takasu, Permanent Representative of Japan and Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, for his report.

Today's debate provides us a useful opportunity to take stock of the first two years of the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission and of its relationship with the Security Council. The Peacebuilding Commission was established in 2005 to fill the gap between peacekeeping and post-conflict rehabilitation by bringing coherence to efforts aimed at the recovery of countries emerging from conflict. That is why it was decided that the Peacebuilding Commission should be an advisory body not only of the General Assembly but also of the Security Council.

The Commission started with realistic expectations. Only two countries were on its agenda for the first year, so that it could develop effective mechanisms before embarking on larger tasks. We can now safely say that the results have been satisfactory. The countries on the agenda are on a promising road to stabilization, despite some difficulties. Three integrated strategies have been agreed on with the active involvement of the countries concerned, in keeping with the cornerstone principle of national ownership.

The Peacebuilding Commission is one element in a triad. The other two are the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and the Peacebuilding Fund. The job of the Fund is to fill a crucial gap, namely, the one resulting from the fact that, even when the donor community is quickly mobilized, it can take time to set up effective mechanisms to channel resources into stabilization and recovery projects. We are therefore heartened to see, as telling proof of the commitment of donors, that the Fund has exceeded the target of $250 million set in 2005. We encourage the Secretary-General to continue his work to make the Fund a flexible and effective instrument. We also encourage him to provide the Peacebuilding Support Office with adequate resources as the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission expands. The Peacebuilding Support Office's role cannot be overstated. It provides the Commission with analyses and instruments to develop and implement effective strategies and support for the effective involvement of the United Nations system.

The Security Council has actively participated in examining countries' requests to be placed on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission and has closely followed the Commission's activities over the past two years. We believe that that cooperation can be intensified by identifying links between the Commission's peacebuilding strategies for a country and the Security Council's decisions and analyses regarding peace and security, as well as by better integrating the Commission's activities into the Council's work.

A peacekeeping operation mandate is but the first step towards the stabilization of a country. The scope and nature of the mandate should contemplate the further steps to be taken. Peacekeeping should no longer be conceived as a stop-gap measure to simply monitor a ceasefire or implement a peace agreement. It should be seen as a long-term investment in peace and

the first crucial phase of the international community's involvement.

The Peacebuilding Commission should develop close and effective cooperation with the entire United Nations system, first and foremost with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. System-wide coherence is therefore a unique opportunity to make the Commission's strategies in the field more effective and to prevent gaps in the transition from peacebuilding to development.

I would like to conclude by focusing on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda. The countries on the agenda so far are from Africa. While the majority of conflicts do indeed occur there, to be a truly global instrument the Commission also has to look at other regions. It must have a broad range of vision to become the world's most reliable instrument for peacebuilding. Time has shown that we can live up to these challenges.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): Allow me to first express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this debate on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission and to thank the Commission for its second annual report. We would also like to thank Ambassador Yukio Takasu of Japan for his remarks and to commend the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, the present and previous Chairs of the four country configurations and the Working Group on Lessons Learned.

In its presidential statement S/PRST/2008/16 of 20 May 2008, the Security Council expressed its intention to support the peacebuilding efforts in countries emerging from conflict. We believe that peacebuilding support should be provided to those countries at an early stage, especially when the Council creates or renews the mandates of United Nations-led missions through its decisions and resolutions. That very important step could ensure that peacebuilding support is incorporated in a United Nations mission.

We hold the view that the more the notion of peacebuilding support is meaningfully reflected in the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping and other United Nations political missions, the greater is the chance for realizing the priority areas of peace consolidation as stipulated in the integrated peacebuilding strategies. The key to that exercise is close consultations with the receiving country, potential contributors and the Secretariat. The Security Council is also an appropriate forum for providing guidance on the political and security aspects of peacebuilding activities.

Yet the challenge is how those aspects could be effectively linked with the social, economic and development components of peacebuilding efforts, as envisioned by other United Nations bodies. My delegation therefore believes that the Commission can play a very important role as a nexus for linking the political and security components taken up at the Council with the social, humanitarian and economic aspects that the Economic and Social Council focuses on.

At the strategic level, that approach can be developed with the Commission's active and substantive engagement with other principal United Nations organs, Bretton Woods institutions and other relevant agencies. At the operational level, it can be derived through the regular interface of the country configurations with the pertinent United Nations funds, programmes and country teams. That will lead to better coherence and integration of the cause of and results in the United Nations system.

The issue of coordination remains critical, given the existence of so many institutions and resources. By giving good consideration to how coordination within the United Nations and between it and other actors might take place, we will more effectively utilize those resources and have a more efficient process. The United Nations itself should continue to play a leading role in the field in coordinating international efforts in post-conflict situations.

For its part, the Security Council, as part of the United Nations system, could play an important role in enhancing adequate coordination and division of labour at the level of United Nations organs. It can ensure the operational relevance of Peacebuilding Commission advice, which remains essential for countries on the agenda of both organs and in resolving the security-related aspects of peacebuilding. The finest synergy between the two organs would serve to clarify and define a seamless transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding.

Close cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council should also continue to be nurtured. That is crucial because it is the Council that draws up referral letters to the Commission. That collaboration also forms a basis for

the Commission to identify peace challenges, risks and priorities in a particular post-conflict country. Further collaboration between the Commission and the Council should also be encouraged in the information-sharing activities that relate to peacebuilding.

The information that the Peacebuilding Commission gathers and that the Security Council receives must be mutually complementary and merged to form a basis for sound decisions with regard to peacebuilding activities. To narrow any gap, there should be more synergy and substantial communication between the Council and the Commission.

Equally essential is the synergy between the Peacebuilding Commission, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Of particular importance is bridging peacebuilding and political stability, socio-economic recovery and humanitarian issues, which would lay the foundation for longer-term development activities. In that regard, as stipulated in the Council's presidential statement S/PRST/2007/42 of 6 November 2007, the Peacebuilding Commission should continue to serve as a forum for coordination between the United Nations system and regional and subregional organizations in the area of post-conflict situations.

My delegation recognizes that the Peacebuilding Commission is steadily leaving its infancy. Its work, however, is not particularly well known to wider audiences, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other civil society groups, whose role in and contribution to peacebuilding efforts have been recognized by the Council. As the co-creator of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Security Council should therefore help in boosting public awareness and visibility of the Commission's work by featuring its processes and outcomes in its various engagements.

Finally, allow me to reiterate that Indonesia, for its part, will continue to support and contribute to the efforts for an integrated and coherent approach in peacebuilding based on the dimensions of security, democracy and development, and to raise awareness of those matters nationally and regionally.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, we would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Japan, Ambassador Takasu, for his efforts in the institutional consolidation of the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in the United Nations system and beyond.

The experience of the Commission's second year proves that assistance by the United Nations and other partners to countries emerging from conflict has met significant complexities in the areas of national capacity-building in recipient countries and the coordination and synergy of peacebuilding efforts by the United Nations and other participants in the peacebuilding process.

Our assessment of the second year of the Commission's work is positive. Significant progress has been achieved in Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. Work has started on identifying the priorities for peacebuilding in the Central African Republic. We believe that one of the great benefits of the Peacebuilding Commission is the establishment of direct dialogue with national Governments, thus ensuring their leading roles in and responsibility for the peacebuilding process. We believe that the main goal of the Peacebuilding Commission at the present stage is to achieve feasible progress at the country level through coordinated implementation of peacebuilding strategies and monitoring and tracking mechanisms under the leadership of the Governments concerned.

We especially note the progress in arranging regular dialogue between the Commission and the Security Council on issues that are on the agenda of the two bodies. We believe that the practice of inviting the Chairs of the country-specific configurations to Council meetings has proved its practical value. In the future, we would like to consider the possibility of holding those meetings in an open format, in order to ensure an interactive dialogue on peacebuilding issues in those countries.

We also believe it is important to ensure an intensive exchange of information in the form of regular meetings between the Chairperson of the Commission and the President of the Security Council and cooperative complementarity between the two organs in drafting the documents of both bodies.

We should also continue the dialogue on the issue of adding new candidates to the Commission's agenda, taking into account the real needs of a specific country for international post-conflict assistance, the progress of the Commission in countries under its consideration — with the understanding that the Commission is not an

additional source of funding — and, above all, a coordination and consultation mechanism. Moreover, we believe that it would be appropriate, over the course of the next year, to begin to discuss criteria, including timelines, for removing countries from the Commission's agenda.

Of course, strengthening the organic relations between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council should continue in parallel with the development of a dialogue among the Commission, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in addition to other United Nations bodies, programmes and funds, the donor community and regional organizations. The Commission should pay greater attention to those issues.

We are of the opinion that during the Commission's third year it will have to strengthen its coordinating role in those areas that require greater attention from the international community by harmonizing its activities with existing assistance mechanisms, primarily within the United Nations system.

In many respects, that will depend on the strengthening of the position of the Peacebuilding Support Office within the Secretariat. In that respect, we place our hopes in the new head of the Office, Ms. Jane Holl Lute. We welcome her presence here in the Security Council today.

We expect that the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office will take an active part in the preparation of the Secretary-General's report on early recovery and post-conflict peacebuilding, as follows from the Security Council meeting in May under the presidency of the United Kingdom. The Commission's expertise in matters of increasing coordination of peacebuilding activities, building the civilian capacities of recipient States and partners, including the United Nations, and early recovery financing mechanisms should all be taken into account in the report.

During the coming year, the Commission will also have to focus on the analysis of lessons learned in the process of peacebuilding. In that connection, we believe it important to improve the efficiency of the Working Group on Lessons Learned. Policy and strategic discussions within the Organizational Committee can also be of practical value. However, they should not undermine the mandate of the Working Group or lead to the development of any doctrinal norms in the area of post-conflict peacebuilding and rehabilitation.

The Commission should also concentrate on the mobilization of additional donor resources, in particular by integrating international financial institutions, regional organizations, private sector funds and trust funds into its work. We attach great importance to the Peacebuilding Fund as a catalyst for emergency financing that can facilitate the mobilization of more sustainable aid mechanisms. We believe the time is ripe to review its terms of reference, and in that connection we expect concrete proposals from the Secretariat in order to begin consideration of the issue in the General Assembly.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important and very welcome debate today. I say "welcome," because peacebuilding remains at the heart of the Security Council's work. The thematic debate we held here in May on post-conflict peacebuilding, which colleagues have referred to, pointed to the shortcomings in stabilization and recovery efforts that exist here, particularly in the immediate aftermath of conflict.

That debate back in May also highlighted the critical role of the Peacebuilding Commission, particularly for sustaining international engagement to ensure that countries do not lapse back into conflict. The year ahead offers an opportunity for us to address collectively the critical gaps that still hamper our peacebuilding efforts.

Let me first commend the work of the Peacebuilding Commission over the past year. I would particularly like to single out the leadership offered by our colleague, Ambassador Takasu of Japan, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, and also the chairing roles of our colleagues from Belgium, Brazil, El Salvador, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. I should like to thank the Peacebuilding Support Office for its role, and we warmly welcome the appointment of Jane Holl Lute as the new Assistant Secretary-General.

The annual report describes the Peacebuilding Commission's achievements, and also the challenges we still face. We have heard in this Council over the past year briefings on drug trafficking, elections, security sector and justice reform, transitional justice and land reform. To help a country out of conflict and

into sustained stability, all those issues frequently have to be addressed. As Ambassador Takasu said, the Peacebuilding Commission has to ensure that it is making a real difference on the ground.

I look forward to the Peacebuilding Commission's continued briefing on the situations in the four countries on its agenda and its advice on what action the Council, as well as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, should consider taking. To achieve that, I hope that the practice of holding monthly meetings between the Commission Chair and Security Council presidencies can be sustained to ensure that our respective work is aligned.

It is important that the interaction between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission not become purely mechanistic. We need to be alive to new threats to peacebuilding and address them quickly. That includes being alert to the impact that the oil and food price crisis, and now the financial crisis can have on peacebuilding.

We should also be more creative at soliciting the Peacebuilding Commission's advice and support. To date, the Security Council has been largely reactive. It has referred to the Commission only those countries that have requested to be on the Commission's agenda, but the Security Council and the Commission itself could take more of the initiative and explore — with the agreement of the country concerned — whether the Commission could rapidly marshal resources to help address a new threat to recovery in a country that is not on the Commission's formal agenda.

Finally, we look forward to the Peacebuilding Commission feeding in its views to inform the Secretary-General's report that was requested at the 20 May debate on how the United Nations can improve its support for early recovery. The report provides an opportunity for the United Nations system to tackle the gaps of leadership, deployable civilian capacity and rapidly available funding that currently impede the international community's work on early recovery. The test will be whether, over time, we can reduce from the present level of 30 per cent the proportion of conflicts that break out again within five years of a peace agreement.

But it does not end there. At the recent debate on mediation and the settlement of disputes that was chaired by President Compaore of Burkina Faso, we noted that peace agreements have fallen apart because of the lack of an implementation plan and because we do not have the right linkages between mediation processes and the critical recovery and peacebuilding phase. As the reports commissioned from the various Security Council debates are taken forward, it is imperative that we build coherence across the conflict spectrum so that effective peace agreements are forged, implemented and sustained.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): Mr. President, I thank you for convening this important debate. I congratulate and welcome new Assistant Secretary-General and head of the Peacebuilding Support Office, Ms. Jane Holl Lute, and assure her of my delegation's full cooperation. I thank the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Yukio Takasu of Japan, for his presence and his introduction of the annual report of the Commission.

The 2005 World Summit emphasized the need for a coordinated, coherent and integrated approach to post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation with a view to achieving lasting peace in the world. The new United Nations peacebuilding architecture of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office has been operationalized as an institutional mechanism to help address the special needs of countries emerging from conflict towards sustained economic recovery and reconstruction.

We welcome the efforts undertaken by the Peacebuilding Commission in implementing its mandates and core functions stipulated in General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005), especially in such areas as enhancing interaction with United Nations agencies, regional organizations and international financial institutions; strengthening public awareness and outreach activities; providing strategy and policy guidance on peacebuilding; establishing monitoring and tracking mechanisms for the Integrated Peacebuilding Strategies; and organizing field missions to countries under review.

As reported by the Secretary-General, the Peacebuilding Fund has made laudable headway in providing assistance to countries in the early stages of post-conflict stabilization and in mobilizing more sustainable aid resources, which is reflected by pledges of over $269 million from 44 donors, as well as the operation of 37 peacebuilding projects in 11 countries.

My delegation notes with satisfaction the tangible results achieved by Sierra Leone and Burundi, the first two countries supported by the Peacebuilding Commission, in the critical areas of preparing local elections, promoting economic growth, rehabilitating infrastructure, youth employment and empowerment, the rule of law and public administration reform. The recent establishment of country-specific configurations for Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic, as well as the consideration of Côte d'Ivoire's request for placement on the Commission's agenda, can be also highlighted.

Despite those achievements, my Delegation shares the view that an evolving Peacebuilding Commission will continue to face a wide array of challenges. Protracted conflicts, the worsening global economic imbalances, the food and energy crisis, the shortage of natural resources, frequent disasters and widespread epidemics have exerted negative impacts on international collective efforts towards durable peace and sustainable development. The Peacebuilding Commission has the difficult task of improving its working methods and provisional rules of procedure, rationalizing its institutional relationship with other United Nations bodies and non-United Nations entities and with the Commission's configurations and formulating a clear consensus on the concepts and priorities of peacebuilding.

On another note, the Peacebuilding Fund has not yet developed its full potential owing to lack of substantial progress in resolving such strategic and managerial issues as the criteria for selecting beneficiary countries, timeframes for drafting and approving projects, the financial and institutional absorptive capability of local Governments, the eligibility of countries for various emergency window funding and the Fund's mobilizing force. Looking forward to the planned 2010 review process of the overall work of the Peacebuilding Commission, we hope that valuable lessons, practices and synergies will be further developed, thus helping not only to prevent the concerned countries from relapsing into conflict, but also to reinforce the early-warning capacity to anticipate potential conflicts and to engage the international community in addressing them.

As the Peacebuilding Commission enters its third year of operation, much remains to be done to help the Commission achieve more concrete results and truly become one of the key international instruments in the coordination of peacebuilding activities. Besides identifying appropriate relationships with the organs and bodies of the United Nations system, the Commission should further strengthen its interaction with the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council in joint efforts towards better coordination, complementarity and division of labour.

Enhanced interaction among various stakeholders is of vital importance. The broad experience of the United Nations system in conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping, humanitarian and election assistance, reconstruction and sustainable development must be fully exploited in conjunction with diverse inputs from local Governments, the Bretton Woods institutions, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations so as to maximize impact on the ground and avert the possible overlapping and duplication of efforts.

The Commission should strengthen its role by improving the integrated peacebuilding strategies and formulating efficient tracking and monitoring mechanisms with a view to fully reflecting the socio-economic reconstruction and development priorities of recipient countries, the comparative advantages and practical commitments of international donors and avoiding unnecessary burdens on national Governments.

We recognize that the Commission may become involved with various activities under different post-conflict contexts, and that a comprehensive and country-specific approach to peacebuilding is therefore essential. My delegation believes that further improvements in the development agenda, especially in poverty reduction, education and training, rural and agricultural rehabilitation, private sector reform and capacity-building, will help address the root causes of conflict, nurture socio-economic recovery and create a framework for lasting peace and sustained reconstruction. The Commission should also promote national ownership and participation in all stages of its work.

In the final analysis, the overarching goal of peacebuilding is to enable the countries emerging from conflict to build up autonomous capacity and domestic resources towards self-sustained peace, security and development, conditions in which the local people are both the primary force and the biggest beneficiaries.

The supplementary role of international expertise and assistance should be implemented with due respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and bearing in mind the specificities and interests of the countries under consideration.

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): In my turn, I would like to thank you, Sir, for having convened this debate on peacebuilding, a subject we are addressing increasingly within the Council. I also wish to welcome amongst us the Ambassador of Japan, Mr. Takasu, who ably and with determination presides over the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as the Ambassadors of Belgium, Brazil, El Salvador, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden for their work on the Commission in its various configurations and for their untiring efforts to establish the value-added of the Commission within the United Nations system.

I would also like to welcome the role of the Peacebuilding Support Office and thank the Secretary-General for his support to that office and, of course, Ms. Carolyn McAskie, who laid the first stones of the foundation, and Ms. Holl Lute, who has recently taken up her appointment, and we wish her every success. Allow me also to inform her that she can count on the full support of France and the European Union.

I also have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union. The issue of post-conflict stabilization is at the heart of the thinking and priorities of the European Union, arising from the 2005 Summit and the broader objectives that have been pursued since then, in particular the request by the Secretary-General to provide a more organized, effective and rapid solution to the challenges of post-conflict, post-crisis situations at the request of the Council.

During its second year of work, the Peacebuilding Commission has shown promising progress. The international community has increased its focus on the countries on the Commission's agenda. For the first two countries on its agenda, Burundi and Sierra Leone, the implementation of peacebuilding strategies is currently based on a clear programme of work for future months. On the ground, coordination has been stepped up. Various national political actors, including civil society, private partners as well as various donors, are speaking with each other and are attempting to implement a common road map.

In that context, we feel it is important to increase the visibility of the Commission and its ability to train and to influence. It is astounding in that sense that the countries that would actually benefit by participating with the Commission are still reticent to do so. We need more efforts at communication, particularly among regional organizations. We might also plan to hold some meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission in places other than New York.

When we speak of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, we must not forget that the problem is not only one of financial resources. The Peacebuilding Commission is not called upon to become a new window for humanitarian or development aid. All efforts and resources of the system must be mobilized, and I am also thinking here of the resources and efforts of the various diasporas.

It is true that, in a number of cases, the key is to extend the circle of States and organizations that support the efforts of the countries on the Commission's agenda. The Central African Republic is a particularly good example of that. It gives the Commission the possibility to further develop its mechanisms so as to ensure that there is adequate mobilization on the part of the international community for a country that has always suffered from relative indifference.

The European Union would like to make a few suggestions for the work of the Commission in the coming year. First, we should encourage the efforts deployed by the Peacebuilding Support Office aimed at strengthening its own capacity to act in support of the work of the Commission. Then, the Commission must improve its working methods in order to be more effective and more strategic, particularly with regard to the future inclusion of new countries on its agenda. Some tools were developed last year. Today the Commission needs to convene meetings that are better prepared but fewer in number and we must not hesitate to call upon the coordination mechanisms of the countries most involved, such as the Peacebuilding Contact Group in the case of Guinea-Bissau, for example. We must also work on the entry points for the Commission's involvement and for the progressive reduction and termination of its involvement. The work of the Commission should be integrated into the Security Council's strategy at as early a stage as possible. Similarly, the Commission should encourage development actors to operate within a political and

security stabilization strategy based on the overall effort to strengthen the coherence of the Organization overall, through the well-known system-wide coherence programme.

I would like to stress the concept of the earliest possible intervention by the Commission, which was mentioned by the Commission's Chairman, the Permanent Representative of Japan, and was seconded by Italy. That approach is vital for us. Of course, we are not yet able to speak about preventing crises, but everyone knows that by dealing with emergence from crisis and post-conflict management we improve a country's ability not to fall back into a crisis. It is clear to us that, in the long term, an ideal arrangement is that which all institutions of the United Nations intervene together, including, indeed — since we are here in the Security Council — when a peacekeeping mission is deployed. That is when we are in a position to properly define the military component and the civilian component of peacekeeping, the indispensable mobilization of national energies and the coherence of all national and regional actors. It is under those conditions that we will also be able to address the problems that come up in the Security Council when we deal with persistent post-conflict situations, of which we have several examples on the Council's agenda. So if get an earlier start, we will be able to shorten the time spent and be more effective across the board. I would even suggest an idea that might seem strange, which is that we deploy a peacebuilding mission before we actually deploy a peacekeeping force, if that is necessary to properly frame the Council's overall intervention effort.

The European Union fully supports the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission, and it shares the priorities that Ambassador Takasu has just proposed to us. The European Commission is actively engaged in all the countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, where the European Union is one of the main donors, if not the leading donor, in terms of humanitarian aid, budget aid and development aid. The European Union also participates in the formulation of peacebuilding strategies. Let us also not forget that the European Union can also support the implementation of the political and security aspects of those strategies, including through the instruments of the European Security and Defence Policy, as is currently the case with the European Union mission in support of security sector reform in Guinea-Bissau.

In conclusion, I would like to say that, like the European Union, the international financial institutions have begun to adapt their instruments. That is also the case for the regional and subregional actors, in particular for the African Union. The United Nations system is showing that it can be more committed and more willing to align itself with strategies defined by the Peacebuilding Commission, and the European Union invites all its bodies to redouble their efforts to ensure such coherence.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to convey my gratitude to the Chinese delegation for having taken the welcome initiative of organizing a Security Council debate on the important topic of the Peacebuilding Commission, just a few days after the General Assembly held a debate on the subject. My delegation listened with a great deal of interest to the statement of Ambassador Takasu, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, and we thank him for the very useful information he provided to the Security Council.

The establishment two years ago of the Peacebuilding Commission was undoubtedly an expression of the international community's solidarity with States emerging from conflict. In general, such States face various challenges — economic, political and social, as well as security-related — which they cannot overcome without sustained international support.

That is why after the inclusion on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda of Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, we are gratified by the recent inclusion of the Central African Republic, followed by the setting up of a country-specific configuration for that country which is being guided so effectively by my neighbour at this table, Ambassador Grauls, who himself recognizes that we are at an important stage in efforts to mobilize the international community to rehabilitate that country. We also hope that Côte d'Ivoire's request for inclusion on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda will soon be granted. That will probably have to wait until the end of the electoral process.

Rightly considered a body possessing the functions of both strengthening peace and preventing the resumption of hostilities in post-conflict situations, the Peacebuilding Commission has already been able to accompany a number of States through a phase of

political and security normalization, the restoration of State authority and economic renewal — in short, the laying of solid foundations for sustainable development.

We thus wish to congratulate the Peacebuilding Commission and its country configurations, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office on their significant achievements.

The present debate is a timely one. It enables us to take stock of achievements and remaining challenges and to join all the actors in seeking the best ways to enable the Commission to better discharge its mission. We encourage the Commission to continue on-site visits, which have shown themselves to be irreplaceable tools to get a good feel for the realities and to engage in direct exchanges with local actors and their partners.

We welcome the contacts and other informal interactions with other United Nations bodies. This cooperation should continue within the framework of a clearly understood partnership and a harmonization of actions that will ensure that the United Nations bodies avoid duplication while abiding by their respective mandates.

The participation of international organizations and civil society in the work of the Commission is also praiseworthy and should continue within the framework of a pooling of efforts to develop integrated strategies.

Basing ourselves on the principle that the main task of the Peacebuilding Commission is to facilitate the institutional link between peacekeeping, post-conflict operations and the international network for assistance and the mobilization of donors, my delegation would like to make the following comments.

First, the Peacebuilding Commission must step up its efforts to mobilize potential partners possessing the necessary resources to assist States in their rehabilitation processes, because, quite clearly, even though significant progress has been achieved, a great deal of potential remains untapped.

Secondly, as an intergovernmental body, the Peacebuilding Commission should play a mainly political role, one of coordinating the actions of all stakeholders in order to avoid duplication, maintain constructive dialogue with all national players, promote in all circumstances national ownership of the process, make recommendations and suggest integrated peacebuilding strategies.

Thirdly, as an advisory body, the Peacebuilding Commission should not in our view aspire to formulate projects or to take final decisions instead of the Peacebuilding Fund, which is better equipped to do so. We encourage the Commission and its partners to continue their efforts for better mobilization of national expertise, particularly in drawing up projects.

Fourthly, we believe that the Peacebuilding Commission's contribution to reconstruction and institutional capacity-building will be effective only if, in its approach, the Commission focus on cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, which, given their familiarity with the field, are in a position to play a significant role in the political dialogue with concerned States and in the mobilization of efforts at a regional and subregional level. Here, I should like to underscore the major role played by the Economic Community of West African States in Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone, as well as the active participation on a bilateral basis of some of its members, in the rehabilitation of these two countries.

The peacebuilding stage is a delicate phase in the post-conflict transition process. On this road towards a restored peace, all dimensions should be equally addressed. We thus recognize that quick-impact projects, if well-implemented, can prove most effective in stabilizing the socio-economic situation, mobilizing political will and re-establishing trust and laying the foundations of rapid rehabilitation.

It remains necessary, however, that all main sectors be rapidly covered and enjoy international aid. This will prevent the feeling that the international community gives pride of place to such sectors of governance, elections and strengthening of the judiciary over such vital fields as energy or basic social services.

Activity on strengthening the rule of law is certainly important in promoting the participation of partners and in laying down the framework for appropriate strategy and behaviour of stakeholders. However, one should not forget that building the basis for lasting peace and development remains the final objective.

It is important that the message of the international community be well understood. This will contribute to reinforcing the confidence of national actors and to promoting effective national ownership of the process.

Mr. Suescum (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to first of all thank the Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Yokio Takasu, for his briefing. I would also like to thank each of the Vice-Chairs of the Commission for their commendable leadership.

Likewise, we would like to recognize the work done by Ms. Carolyn McAskie as Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support and we welcome the appointment of Ms. Jane Holl Lute.

The activities undertaken by the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission during its second session represent significant progress in the fulfilment of the tasks entrusted to us by the Heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit. The expansion of the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission to include four countries clearly highlights the credibility that this body has gained in the international community. This has been achieved by developing flexible, coordinated, coherent and integrated responses to the challenges of peacebuilding as shown by the cases of Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau.

In the same way, this trust has been strengthened thanks to the participation of civil society, the Bretton Woods institutions, the European Community and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. This participation has also had a positive impact on the operational criteria for the work of the Commission.

Additionally, the field missions have shown the commitment of the Commission to the countries on its agendas and have also inspired greater coordination with national political actors, partners and donors. Notwithstanding this success, the Commission still faces a number of challenges if it is to have a genuine and sustainable impact in the field.

It is important that the Commission take into account its capacities and the lessons learned, that it furthermore define adequate criteria in order to ensure that the countries on its agenda participate as actors in the process. They should own the process and be able to benefit as much as possible from the work of the Commission.

This requires a communications and dissemination strategy in order to make known what the Commission does, as well as its achievements. Likewise, the Commission should redefine its points of focus and working methods by establishing, for each case, specific indicators for the monitoring and follow-up of the integrated strategies.

We should also increase the participation of the private sector as well as that of regional and subregional organizations.

Panama believes that sustainable peace depends on the interactive triangular relationship between security, development and human rights. In this context, it is important to improve the overall planning process of the Peacebuilding Support Office, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs, in order to better define the missions that are authorized by the Security Council.

For its part, the Council, together with the Commission and the other organs and bodies of the United Nations, should create mechanisms for preventing duplication and which ensure that there is complementarity of effort in the countries that are being dealt with through its respective programmes.

The responsibility to ensure the success of the Commission is above all, the duty of the Organization. Our ongoing and firm commitment to ensure the continuous success of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission should be aimed at improving the impact of this Organization as a whole and, in a tangible way, improve the lives of thousands of people who are returning to their post-conflict communities.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Allow me to express our gratitude to you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission.

We would also like to thank the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission's Organizational Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Yukio Takasu, representative of Japan, for his sterling work.

We would also like to commend the significant contribution made by the Chairs of the country-specific configurations on Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea-

Bissau and the Central African Republic as well as the Chair of the Commission's Working Group on Lessons Learned.

South Africa welcomes the second report of the Peacebuilding Commission and applauds the accomplishments of the Commission during its second session particularly, the important strides made towards implementing its mandate and core functions.

We believe a strong Peacebuilding Commission is crucial for addressing challenges associated with conflict, instability and underdevelopment. A successful Commission is important in preventing post-conflict countries from relapsing into conflict.

Among the successes of the Peacebuilding Commission has been its continued efforts aimed at strengthening its relationship and cooperation with relevant organs and institutions, including the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

At the same time, my delegation underlines the importance of strengthened cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and relevant regional and subregional organizations. The African Union continues to play its role in the peacebuilding field, including through the African Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework which places emphasis on addressing the root causes of conflict.

We are indeed pleased that, as reflected in the Peacebuilding Commission report, its Organizational Committee held interactive dialogue with the Chairperson of the African Union Peace and Security Council and received a briefing from former President of Mozambique, Joaquim Chissano during the reporting period. We look forward to further interactions of this nature, as they are crucial for strengthening and promoting cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

My delegation also commends the establishment of regular contacts between the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council on issues relating to the work of the Commission. In that context, we reaffirm our continued support for those relationships to be strengthened.

Now that the United Nations peacebuilding architecture is in place, the challenge is how to consolidate the achievements made thus far. South Africa firmly believes that the Peacebuilding Commission should continue to be driven by Member States. The Organizational Committee of the Commission must continue to be the focal point of all the Commission's activities and decisions, and its central role should be strengthened.

We are pleased to note that the country-specific meetings have made a tremendous contribution to the success of the Commission over the past two years. Through the work of those configurations, the Commission significantly contributed to the promotion and adoption of strategic frameworks for Burundi, Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone. The establishment of monitoring and tracking mechanisms to check the progress of the implementation of the framework is also essential to the success of peacebuilding efforts on the ground.

With regard to the country-specific configuration on the Central African Republic, my delegation is confident that, under the leadership of the Permanent Representative of Belgium, the Commission's efforts in that country will yield positive results.

National ownership of the peacebuilding process remains fundamental to assisting post-conflict countries to rebuild their institutions and sustain peace and development. To that end, we commend the Governments of countries on the Commission's agenda for their active role in efforts to rebuild their respective countries.

My delegation welcomes the report's acknowledgement of the importance of official development assistance, trade and investment in post-conflict countries. We hope that the Commission will continue to develop methods for mobilizing international and domestic resources. At the same time, quick-impact projects and the sufficient injection of predictable resources in a country emerging from conflict is crucial to ensuring stability and development on the ground.

In conclusion, as we gradually build up the experience of the Peacebuilding Commission, we need to place stronger emphasis on the nexus between peace and development. In that regard, we support a greater and stronger focus on the development agenda of the countries on the agenda of the Commission. South Africa remains committed to the cause of the Peacebuilding Commission. We will continue to work

with others towards ensuring that post-conflict countries do not relapse into conflict and to maximize the Commission's impact on the ground in full alignment, cooperation and in accordance with the national Government policies and strategies.

Mr. Jurica (Croatia): I thank you, Sir, for organizing this debate to consider the second annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission. Today's deliberations should help us to take stock of the progress made thus far and the challenges we face as we enter the Commission's third year of work.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Chairman of the Organizational Committee, Ambassador Yukio Takasu, for his observations and for his admirable chairmanship of the Commission.

The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission was, in our opinion, one of the most important results of United Nations reform to date. The peacebuilding concept, as enacted through the Commission, offers the best way for us to effectively implement and consolidate the three main pillars of the United Nations: security, development and the protection of human rights. Only if they are implemented together can sustainable peace and long-lasting stability and prosperity be achieved.

We are equally cognizant that the chances for substantive peace are enhanced by the speedy and coordinated engagement of the United Nations system as a whole following the establishment of a ceasefire on the ground or the signing of a peace agreement. It is therefore imperative that all post-conflict efforts be coordinated and integrated so that they can be utilized to capacity while substantially reducing overlap.

It was for those particular reasons that Croatia supported and greatly values the establishment in 2006 of the Peacebuilding Commission and its subsequent work on country-specific issues. We believe that its second session brought many positive developments that can be built upon in the future, in particular those related to the more focused approach to countries on the Commission's agenda. We hope that this approach will be maintained, in particular with respect to the new countries on the Commission's agenda — Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic — whose inclusion we very much welcome. Furthermore, we see the expansion of the Commission's agenda as a clear sign of its growing relevance, vitality and strength within the United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

That having been said, we would like to echo the views expressed by some members around this table on the need to keep in mind that the Commission's evolution should go hand in hand with its flexibility. In our view, enhanced flexibility brings more responsiveness and more agility to the Peacebuilding Commission in addressing post-conflict situations. Similarly, although we value the current interaction between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, we believe that room still exists for enhancing such cooperation and for making better use of the Commission's input in the Council's deliberations.

My delegation sees benefits in the idea put forward in previous debates with regard to soliciting the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission on country-specific issues placed on the agendas of the Security Council and the Commission. In our opinion, that would be of benefit first and foremost to those countries being debated, and give other interested parties and organizations the opportunity to provide relevant information that would allow the Security Council to adopt more informed decisions.

All the activities that we are talking about today will obviously not be possible without sufficient, timely and flexible funding. As one of the founders of and contributors to the Peacebuilding Fund, Croatia hopes that the Fund will be able to further evolve into a mechanism capable of responding promptly to the Commission's needs.

Finally, we hope that during its third year, the Peacebuilding Commission will continue to build on the previous experience and work done thus far, taking in and applying the lessons learned and strengthening its efficiency, flexibility and dynamism in response to the peacebuilding needs of the countries on its agenda.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to begin by thanking the Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Takasu of Japan, for his briefing and the information provided therein.

As we consider the work of the Peacebuilding Commission over the past year, I wish to express our pleasure at the Commission's achievements. The Commission's limited experience does not yet allow us to claim that it has survived the test of the first five years, as the Brahimi report puts it, but the actions

undertaken and their results to date are cause for optimism.

My delegation takes this opportunity to address three very specific points.

First is the importance of further strengthening coordination and coherence among the organs and bodies of the United Nations and of increasing cooperation with international financial institutions, regional development banks and regional and subregional organizations. As I have noted previously, after two years of work the Commission has made progress towards achieving its objectives and taken an important step towards achieving coordination and coherence within the United Nations system in post-conflict situations.

However, it is especially important to develop even closer coordination mechanisms, particularly with special representatives of the Secretary-General in the countries on the Commission's agenda. This would enable us to maximize existing resources and, in particular, to provide the Organization's principal representative in the field with the tools needed to promote the implementation of the agreements that will bring about progress towards resolution of the political issues that underlie all conflicts.

Secondly, it is necessary to overcome the arbitrary distinction between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. My delegation has said that the Security Council, when it decides to create or renew a peacekeeping mission, should include in its mandate all the elements necessary to ensure that the transition from conflict to a post-conflict situation to development takes place in as orderly a way as possible. To that end, we consider that the concept of integrated missions will enable us to appropriately meet the challenges inherent in all conflict and post-conflict situations, both in terms of the sound management of resources and in terms of results-oriented action.

I think it is particularly difficult to pinpoint the moment when a peacekeeping operation becomes an operation with a peacebuilding task. In our view, elements of both are present from the beginning, with one of them predominant depending on progress or deterioration on the ground. We therefore do not think that the concept of graduation is appropriate, applicable or positive in a conflict or post-conflict conflict in moving to the peacebuilding stage. In that regard, we welcome the Council's practice of inviting the Chair of the relevant country configuration to advise the Council on the action that should be taken, on the basis of action taken by the Peacebuilding Commission. It is important that this relationship be strengthened in operational terms to enable the Council to adopt decisions based on analyses that take account of all the elements that are in daily play on the ground.

Finally, my delegation stresses the need, for operational reasons, to distinguish between peacebuilding and development, but without creating any artificial competition between the two. Just as we think it neither practical nor helpful to attempt to distinguish between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, we believe that we should identify criteria by which to define the point at which the efforts of the international community and national efforts have borne sufficient fruit that it is possible to move beyond the exceptionality that gave rise to a given intervention. If we cannot define the point at which a situation ceases to be viewed as an emergency, then we will have interventions that, rather than building peace, will promote a culture of patronage and will weaken good governance and responsibility, sowing the seeds of future conflict.

This gives special responsibility to the donor community. The criteria for allocating development assistance cannot be the same as those for allocating peacebuilding assistance. We understand that this is no easy matter, but the additional effort will be rewarded in the medium term by better allocation of resources and clearly identifiable results. Nor can the same operational rules be applied in every context. As we indicated in speaking of the need to strengthen the role of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General in terms of coordination and coherence, when it comes to peacebuilding the donor community should permit relatively flexible management in order to achieve the goals that in the medium term will enable us to lay the foundations of sustainable development.

The Peacebuilding Commission offers a creative and flexible response, and that is where its great strength lies. The Security Council should muster similar creativity and flexibility so that, working in a coordinated manner, it will be possible to maximize its use of existing resources and facilitate the speedy achievement of sustainable results in the places where it has decided to intervene, in exercise of its mandate.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish at the outset to thank His Excellency Ambassador Yukio Takasu, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, for his briefing on the Commission's work and on his efforts at the helm of the Commission. We also pay tribute to the representatives of Belgium, Brazil, the Netherlands and Norway for their efforts as Chairs of the country-specific configurations.

The Peacebuilding Commission was established to buttress the change in the nature of peacekeeping operations, which in the past had been focused more on military and security issues. But those two elements in themselves are not enough to address all the challenges arising from armed conflict, including political, economic and humanitarian problems. The establishment of the Commission was thus a significant step towards sustainable post-conflict peace.

We want to say how much we appreciate the Commission's efforts, both in the organization of its work and in its interaction with other United Nations bodies and with the African Union, thus ensuring effective working relationships in the discharge of its mandate. We wish also to voice our satisfaction about the Commission's interest in identifying the ways and means of meeting the challenges it faces in discharging its mandate.

We pay tribute to the success of the Burundi configuration. The Government of Burundi has been able to achieve a lasting Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding, through the establishment of a joint monitoring and tracking mechanism. There was also agreement with the Government of Burundi on an annual work plan, focusing on Peacebuilding Fund projects in the areas of security and good governance.

The situation is similar with respect to the implementation of the Commission's programmes in Sierra Leone. Indeed, the Commission and the Government of Sierra Leone have jointly adopted the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework. Work in that country has been focused on assistance in meeting the commitments set out in the framework of the expansion of the donor base and the launching of new priority activities, with a focus on justice and security. We are confident that the Commission will continue its efforts in the same spirit and with the same effectiveness in the Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau.

We thank donors for their contributions to the Peacebuilding Support Office, which have enabled it to exceed its targets. That also gives us reason to hope for an increase in the number of donors.

We agree with the comments and recommendations contained in the report with regard to the development of an integrated peacebuilding strategy. We continue to focus on assisting national efforts in the areas of dialogue, national reconciliation, capacity-building, institutional reform, economic revitalization and human rights, including efforts to mobilize resources and rationalize their use. Here, we should stress the importance of international, regional and subregional efforts, as well as joint efforts with main United Nations bodies.

In that connection, we wish to make the following points. First, it is quite clear that, while top priority should be placed on security sector reform, judicial reform and overall institutional reform, we should also focus on improving living conditions, creating jobs and providing medicine and food.

Secondly, all efforts and decisions of the Peacebuilding Commission must be carried out not only in coordination with local authorities, but also with their consent. Thus, all projects should reaffirm the concept of national ownership. The relevant national and local authorities must be convinced that what is being implemented is a result of their own decisions and that international efforts are aimed solely at supporting their decisions, not undermining them.

Thirdly, if the effectiveness of the Commission's work is to be enhanced, its annual programmes should be incorporated into a longer-term plan, such as a three- or five-year plan. We know full well that that is no easy task to accomplish. However, if we are successful, it would strengthen stabilization, build trust among donors and convince them that their assistance is needed.

We are convinced that the Peacebuilding Commission has recognized that it must carry out its mandate of peacebuilding in post-conflict countries within the framework of global sustainable development. Thus, the future of peacebuilding depends on our careful understanding of the nature of all conflicts and on national ownership of all peacebuilding and development efforts supported by the international community. It is quite clear that the success of the Commission's efforts will depend on the

support that it provides to post-conflict countries in the area of sustainable development.

I wish to conclude by commending the results of the visit made to the Central African Republic by the Peacebuilding Commission under the chairmanship of the representative of Belgium. That visit led to an agreement with local authorities concerning priority areas for peacebuilding in the Central African Republic. We hope that the Commission's second visit, which is currently being prepared, will also be successful.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of China.

We welcome the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its second session (S/2008/417) and thank Ambassador Takasu, Chair of the Commission, for his briefing.

We take a positive view of the achievements of the Peacebuilding Commission over the past year. We also note that the Commission is a new organ created little more than two years ago. Therefore, there is still room for the Commission to improve its internal institution-building, to better coordinate the positions of various parties and to increase its mobilization of financial resources for reconstruction. We expect to see those improvements in its future work.

When the annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission was considered in the General Assembly on 9 October 2008 (see A/63/PV.23), delegations commented extensively on how the work of the Commission could be improved. We hope that the Commission will be able to benefit from those useful suggestions.

As one of the parent organs of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Security Council increased its communications and contacts with the Commission over the past year. On the one hand, the Council often listened to briefings by the relevant facilitators of the Commission when the situations in Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau were under consideration and provided political support by issuing documents at the close of those meetings. On the other hand, the Peacebuilding Commission has submitted many recommendations to the Security Council based on its active participation in the peacebuilding processes in the countries concerned, thus filling some of the gaps in the work of the Council.

As close cooperation between the Council and Commission is imperative in order to strengthen the peacebuilding processes in Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic, the links between the two bodies must be strengthened, not weakened. We should reflect on how to further enhance the cooperation between them. In that connection, China wishes to make the following points.

First, the Security Council should institutionalize its efforts to enhance its communication with the Peacebuilding Commission. The Council should periodically engage in consultations with the Chairman of the Commission in order to share experiences and compare priorities for the immediate future. The Security Council should continue to invite the relevant facilitators of the Peacebuilding Commission to brief the Council when it considers the situations in countries that are also on the Commission's agenda, such as Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic. The Council may have informal informational meetings with the Commission, as appropriate, in order to further strengthen the links between the two bodies.

Secondly, the Security Council should take into account the recommendations of the Peacebuilding Commission as much as possible. The Commission has submitted many recommendations to the Council regarding the situations in Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. The Council should attach importance to those recommendations and take them into account. In the future, the Commission's mission reports to the Security Council should, like the reports of the Secretary-General, inform the consideration of relevant issues in the Council.

Thirdly, the Security Council should work more closely with the Peacebuilding Commission when new countries are to be included on the Commission's agenda. As the situations in some of the countries on the Council's agenda improve, they will gradually embark on the path of peacebuilding and wish to be moved from the Council's agenda to the Commission's agenda. The Council should then work more closely with the Commission and seek its views, as appropriate, regarding the inclusion of new countries on its agenda.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council. I call on the representative of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Minah (Sierra Leone): Let me warmly congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October and to convey my delegation's sincere appreciation to you for organizing this debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. May I also assure you of my delegation's support for your successful conduct of the work of the Council throughout your tenure. My delegation also wishes to convey its gratitude for the work of Ambassador Takasu and for his comprehensive report.

I would like to pay a special tribute to the former Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Carolyn McAskie, for her significant contribution to making the Peacebuilding Commission a force for good. Indeed, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Fund undoubtedly required the experience and sterling organizational qualities of Ms. McAskie to survive its formative years. By the same token, let me also congratulate and welcome the current Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Jane Holl Lute, whose background and exceptional track record make her a worthy successor to take the Peacebuilding Support Office and United Nations peacebuilding endeavours to the next level.

We deeply appreciate this debate because it provides yet another opportunity to take stock of the progress made by the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund in delivering on their mandate to consolidate peace in countries emerging from conflict by addressing critical gaps in their recovery efforts. In this respect, we are constantly confronted with the need to ascertain the extent to which the Commission has been successful in garnering sustained international attention and the necessary strategic commitment to mobilize resources to implement the compacts with countries on the agenda of the Commission.

As one of the pioneer beneficiaries, Sierra Leone has witnessed a significant evolution in United Nations peacebuilding in the very short time the Peacebuilding Commission has been at work. The evolution of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) into the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) and now into the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) is evidence of the country's contribution to this endeavour. Similarly, the Peacebuilding Commission's engagement in Sierra Leone has had a positive impact on the Government's peacebuilding efforts. As a Government, we recognize the contribution of the quick-impact projects implemented within the key priority areas for cooperation. The range of bilateral and multilateral interventions targeted at supporting projects aimed at promoting democracy, good governance, justice and security reform, together with youth employment and energy sector initiatives, continues to show promising signs of consolidating peace in Sierra Leone.

Despite these advances in the peacebuilding process in Sierra Leone, the problem of resource unpredictability remains a critical issue. For instance, the Secretary-General's initial allocation in March 2007 of $35 million from the Peacebuilding Fund to Sierra Leone has been completely exhausted. I wish to reiterate our recent appeal to our partners, launched at High-Level Stakeholders Consultation in May, to scale up their assistance. That would be useful to expedite the implementation of the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework. The challenge for all of us is to sustain the fragile peace.

Peacebuilding work cannot be successfully implemented without the much-needed resources to advance the process. These human and financial resources are key to building a lasting peace, establishing national reconciliation and combating poverty. In our experience, when the weapons of war go silent, post-conflict societies are more often than not left with the scars of massive devastation and the flight of their limited skilled work force. It is therefore necessary to continue to emphasize the enormous demand for human, technical and financial resources for post-conflict State building.

In this regard, Sierra Leone is encouraged by the recent catalytic support provided by the Secretary-General from the Peace Building Fund to the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea-Bissau to kick-start critical peacebuilding interventions in those countries. That effort clearly underscores the preventive approach Sierra Leone has since been advocating. The dilemma, however, is that, in comparative terms, while hundreds of millions of dollars are dedicated to peacekeeping efforts, the crucial beneficial measure of conflict prevention

remains woefully underfunded. That phenomenon clearly begs for a serious rethinking of the international community's and the United Nations approach to the maintenance of international peace and security. Additional financial resources and technical assistance are key to the effective and meaningful implementation of the Cooperation Framework. Indeed, if we are to accelerate the process of helping countries emerging from conflict get on track for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, it is logical to provide them with much-needed support in their post-conflict reconstruction efforts.

We fully concur with the Secretary-General's appeal for support for the Peacebuilding Commission in order to establish and operationalize a capacity-building fund and a youth basket fund, to establish a national youth commission and to elaborate a comprehensive national youth policy.

Concerned about the security implications of the scarcity and the rising price of food, His Excellency Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, President of Sierra Leone, in his address to the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, reiterated his Government's appeal for agriculture to be urgently considered as a priority for collaboration with Sierra Leone. On 25 September, he asserted that Africa must increase food productivity and achieve food self-sufficiency, that massive investment in agriculture was the key to a long-term solution and that Sierra Leone was suitably positioned to benefit from such investment.

For the Peacebuilding Commission's engagement with post-conflict societies to be meaningful, the principles of national ownership, coherence and coordination, particularly in the setting of priorities, should be the guide posts for cooperation between those countries, the United Nations and the international community.

My Government is doing everything within its power to expedite the finalization of the second generation Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. We count on the continued support of the Peacebuilding Commission to provide critical assistance to my Government to develop and prepare a national aid policy and ensure greater coherence and coordination among our international partners in achieving our peacebuilding and national recovery efforts. To this end, I would like to express the sincere gratitude of my delegation to all our bilateral and multilateral partners for their targeted interventions in the implementation of programmes and institutional capacity-building. On behalf of my Government, I wish in particular to extend our profound appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for their unwavering commitment to fostering peace, stability and development in Sierra Leone.

I would be remiss in my duty if I failed to conclude my statement by reiterating the statement of Sierra Leone's Minister for Foreign Affairs during her address to the Security Council on 20 May, in which she stated:

> "Delivering sustainable peace is not only an act of enlightened self-interest, but also a public good for all of mankind and humanity. Experience has proven that conflict and social instability breed poverty, flagrant violations of human rights and human dignity, socio-economic disparity and social and political disintegration. The causes of conflict are like their effects: poverty, low economic growth, ethnic and cultural intolerance, and the mugging of democracy, social justice and human dignity. Wrestling with this vicious cycle of instability and underdevelopment in our present global reality is, therefore, clearly not an act of charity." (S/PV.5895, p. 5)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Guineau-Bissau.

Mr. Cabral (Guineau-Bissau) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to thank you and through you all of your distinguished colleagues for the opportunity that you have afforded my delegation to take part in this debate.

Everyone agrees in their recognition of the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission as one of the major achievements of the 2005 World Summit. The facts are clear and point to both the appropriateness and the timeliness of that long-awaited decision. As indicated a short while ago by our colleagues the representatives of Italy and the Russian Federation, the results have largely been positive. There are many reasons for the positive results we welcome today.

First, for reasons the Security Council is well aware of and which have been widely referred to here today and in the General Assembly a few days ago, it was altogether necessary that we establish the

Peacebuilding Commission. However, we must recognize above all that we have been fortunate to have two Chairpersons whose indisputably effective and devoted efforts have provided unequalled dynamism to this new undertaking in which we are involved. I should like to take this opportunity to once again thank Ambassador Gaspar Martins, the representative of Angola, who was Chair of the Commission in its first year. Above all, I would also like to emphasize how much Ambassador Takasu of Japan has been responsible for promoting the operationalization of such an important process.

I should also like to say that we have had the good fortune to work very closely with the Peacebuilding Support Office under the leadership of the very competent Carolyn McCaskie, who has contributed her experience, dedication and commitment to a cause that we should, and in fact do, support so honourably. On behalf of my delegation, I should like to say how very pleased we are to note how admirably she has been replaced by Ms. Jane Holl Lute. I wish to congratulate her on her appointment and to express how very much we appreciate her experience and personal commitment to the same values. I would like her to know that we are quite prepared to work with her to ensure the success of this very important Commission.

In the briefing by Ambassador Takasu, who is the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission, it has become clear that the Commission is doing excellent work. I say "excellent" work because it is sending a new message and, as the Ambassador of Costa Rica has just said, the Commission is demonstrating greater creativity and flexibility. That is because Chairman Ambassador Takasu is attempting to ensure that the Commission can make a difference — not just to send a message of hope to people who are suffering, like my people, those of Guinea-Bissau, but also to attest to the solidarity that was just referred to by my colleague from Burkina Faso. We are in fact talking about solidarity — international solidarity with people who are suffering, people emerging from conflict, but people who nevertheless believe that they are not facing a hopeless situation and that they can overcome that situation through determination and the support of the international community. That is precisely the support that the Peacebuilding Commission provides. Allow me therefore to say that we truly owe an enormous debt of gratitude to all the Chairs of the various configurations, each of whom is giving his or her best.

In addition, I should also like to pay tribute to the Ambassador of El Salvador, who, as we know, presides over the working group on the lessons that should be learned — lessons that I hope will indeed be learned and remembered in the future. Of course, the Council will also understand that I must also pay very special tribute to Ambassador Viotti, the representative of Brazil, for her excellent work as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration.

In Guinea-Bissau we have every reason to be pleased with the results we have achieved, which are clear and demonstrate not just the solidarity of the international community but also the fact that we in Guinea-Bissau, my fellow citizens, are indeed able to emerge from the situation. It is not insurmountable. As indicated by the Chairman in his briefing, we recently adopted a comprehensive strategy that was the result of thorough work that was carried out in an inclusive manner, with all actors, all interested persons, everyone with a stake in the life of Guinea-Bissau. That included Government officials, but above all, members of civil society, young people, and women, who make up the driving force of all development, as well as politicians from the various political parties. That has resulted in an inclusive process. The strategic framework has been the culmination of all that work. That should be the approach for the future, which is to say, an approach that is results-oriented and based on inclusive democracy.

I should therefore like to say to the members of the Security Council that the Peacebuilding Commission is a major component of peacebuilding in countries emerging from conflicts. I cannot say enough how satisfied we are with the growing cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council in a matter as fundamental as the future of peoples who are suffering, emerging from conflict and determined to establish the conditions for a democracy based on respect for human rights, the acknowledgement of and the pre-eminence of the rule of law and the participation of all men and women in the national affairs of a country.

Before I conclude, I should wish to say that there is a major problem in Guinea-Bissau, namely, drug trafficking. We are determined to combat that scourge with the help of the international community. In a few

days, we will be present at Praia, Cape Verde, to participate in a ministerial conference of the countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Regional and subregional cooperation is a crucial element, as the Ambassador of Burkina Faso has just said. We in ECOWAS have decided to provide a comprehensive solution to a generalized problem. Allow me to say that we are quite satisfied with the adoption of the strategy, for it will enable us to bring about major reforms in the areas of defence, security and public administration. We will also be able to establish a credible system of justice, which is necessary for the strengthening of the rule of law. Through such a system, we will be able to ensure that those who commit crimes are punished by a well-established judicial system that meets universally recognized standards.

Finally, allow me to say that we agree with the notion of ownership that was referred to just now by the representative of South Africa. Such ownership, as we understand it, is first and foremost a responsibility to be assumed by the country concerned and, secondly, a shared responsibility, because we are all in this surge of solidarity together. We are all moved by the same desire to ensure that the countries concerned will be able to see new democracies born through free and credible elections, such as we plan to hold on 16 November. Therefore, through viable democratic institutions, we must ensure that the people who are suffering are finally able to hope for a better day.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. Majoor (Netherlands): Today's debate is important, especially considering the close relationship that exists between this Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. I gladly take this opportunity to share our views on the Peacebuilding Commission two years after it first became operational. I do so while expressing my thanks for the leadership of so many: Ambassador Takasu, the Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission; his predecessor, the representative of Angola; Carolyn McAskie, who headed up the Peacebuilding Support Office so well; Jane Holl Lute, who has started so energetically in the same function; and, above all, the Governments of the countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, and more specifically, the Government of Sierra Leone, represented here by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs.

From the outset, allow me to state that I align myself with the statement of France on behalf of the European Union.

The Peacebuilding Commission has invested considerable time and effort over the past two years in implementing its mandate through the development of the appropriate strategic approach and implementation mechanisms. The result has been the conclusion of Peacebuilding Cooperation Frameworks for three countries on its agenda — Burundi, Siena Leone and, recently, Guinea-Bissau — based on an extensive mapping of peacebuilding gaps in those countries. Those efforts, which the Commission has had to undertake while operating in largely uncharted waters, have involved the active participation of all relevant stakeholders, ranging from the Governments in the countries concerned and the Peacebuilding Commission's members to the various stakeholders on the ground.

While those in themselves are important achievements from which the Peacebuilding Commission should draw confidence, they are only a stepping stone towards the ultimate goal of the Commission. That goal is and must remain making a positive difference in the countries on its agenda by ensuring that the identified peacebuilding gaps are effectively addressed. That is, as has been reiterated many times before, the most effective way to prevent a relapse into conflict in countries that have been struggling to strengthen their stability and democracy since their conflict ended.

That is therefore where the added valued of the Peacebuilding Commission ultimately lies, and that is the basis on which the Commission should be assessed. Taking that as our yardstick, and recognizing the considerable achievements that have been made both by the Governments of the countries on its agenda and by the Commission itself, we can fairly say that we are not there yet.

What is needed at this point in time — and this should guide the Peacebuilding Commission's activities in the coming months — is concrete support from both existing and new donors to address the peacebuilding gaps that have been identified in the countries on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda. We have so far done the strategic work for Burundi, for Sierra Leone and for Guinea-Bissau. We have committed to ensuring that the identified gaps will be

addressed. It is now time to translate our commitments into concrete engagements.

To do that, support from the United Nations on the ground will be crucial. In that context, I welcome the establishment of the first-ever United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) and the fact that UNIPSIL is mandated to work closely with the Peacebuilding Commission and support the implementation of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework and the Peacebuilding Fund's projects.

Such a continued integrated United Nations presence in Sierra Leone is needed to consolidate the gains made thus far and provide coherent and coordinated support to the Government of Sierra Leone in its peace consolidation efforts. UNIPSIL needs to be fully staffed and operational as soon as possible.

I welcome the commendable efforts of the Acting Executive Representative of the Secretary-General and express the hope that a permanent appointment will be made as soon as possible. Effective and continued leadership of the Office is of paramount importance. We cannot afford another gap in the leadership of that Office at such a crucial time.

Sierra Leone offers a number of lessons on integration and collaboration between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council. Those lessons should be applied in the upcoming Council discussions on strengthening the United Nations political missions in Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic. In particular, the Guinea-Bissau Peacebuilding Strategic Framework should be used to guide the mandate renewal process for United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau in the same way as the mandate for UNIPSIL took into account the peacebuilding priorities identified in the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework for Sierra Leone.

There is unwavering support for the Peacebuilding Commission's original mandate and a consensus that the Commission is on the right track. We are all anxious to see the Commission succeed, which in practice means that the countries on its agenda succeed. However, the Commission's success, unfortunately, is not determined by our vocal support or our endorsement of its mandate; it is determined by our readiness to make a contribution in the country concerned. When the time comes to thoroughly evaluate the Commission in the light of its original mandate — and that time will come — we must be confident that every effort was made to make it work.

The time to make the Commission work is now. We have before us sufficient strategic documents to determine where our support is needed the most. Let us not waver, and let us offer whatever expertise or funds we can muster to ensure that the four countries on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda will be irreversibly on track towards consolidated peace and stability.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of El Salvador.

Mrs. Gallardo Hernández (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes the initiative to hold this open debate of the Security Council on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund. El Salvador endorses the statement that was made by Ambassador Takasu in his capacity as Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, and pays tribute to his leadership of the Commission.

The Peacebuilding Commission was established with the aim of creating a new peacebuilding architecture in the United Nations system to help countries emerging from conflict and moving from war towards development, as was once the case of my country. That vision was expressed by the heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit.

El Salvador shares that vision and is grateful for the honour of acting as Vice-Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission. Serving on the Commission enables us to repay the aid that we received from the international community at times of difficulty for my country. We have made efforts to share the experiences of our own peacebuilding process by sharing a comprehensive vision of what that process involves, including specific topics such as demobilization and reintegration of armed forces and the creation and functioning of the national civilian police, among others.

Sharing experience likewise implies contributing to the prevention of the resurgence of violence by involving various players in the process and combining efforts with regional organizations and friendly countries, without forgetting the implementation of strategies that promote sustainable development.

The Commission and the membership in general have been strengthened by the work undertaken by the Working Group on Lessons Learned, which we have the honour to chair. This Group, as has been said, has examined a broad spectrum of issues ranging from elections and risk reduction in post-conflict situations to local governance and decentralization, as well as transitional justice, the situation of internally displaced persons in the context of peacebuilding, the strengthening of the fiscal capacity of States by supporting their national budgets, matters related to the environment, conflicts and peacebuilding, inter alia. We have been able to review cross-cutting issues that are fundamental for those processes. Among them, I would add gender and peacebuilding through the strengthening of the participation of women, as well as the importance of regional approaches in peacebuilding.

We feel it is important that the work of this Working Group be strengthened in the future, bearing in mind that it is a forum for dialogue and exchange of experiences and best practices, which permits a broad review of the various factors that affect peacebuilding in post-conflict countries and, in particular, with a view to helping on-the-ground initiatives in the countries under consideration.

El Salvador supports strengthening the relation of our Commission with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. We are pleased that contribution pledges exceeded the expectations of $200 million. We align ourselves with other delegations in advocating greater collaboration between the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as greater transparency and accountability. We hope that the Peacebuilding Fund will benefit national and regional projects that can transform certain aspects of the realities on the ground and strengthen the peacebuilding process. The fact that there is no armed violence in a particular context or region should not preclude consideration for transferring resources to a key sector for peace, security and development.

El Salvador is aware of the importance of equitable participation of the various regional groups in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, as conflicts are not, unfortunately, the sole preserve of any particular society. On the contrary, they are a product of a series of internal and international factors that come together to respond violently, unfortunately, to the unmet demands of various social and political groups. From that perspective, to the extent that the international community works together and assumes the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, there will be more opportunities for political dialogue and shared experiences between post-conflict countries and the United Nations system as a whole to make substantive contributions to help people in conflict overcome their differences by peaceful means, resorting to dialogue and negotiation as a foundation for that national understanding.

By way of conclusion, El Salvador calls on the regional groups and the member countries of the Peacebuilding Commission to consider, with an inclusive perspective, the matter of equitable participation in the Commission. Let us secure the best options for overcoming a certain impasse that concerns us at the moment and define in good faith the composition of the Commission, since our true mission is to help the countries in question on the ground.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

Ms. Jahan (Bangladesh): First let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate of the Security Council on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission. I believe such deliberations will further the operational relations between the two bodies.

Given the complexity of its work and an increasingly demanding mandate, the work of the second session of the Peacebuilding Commission is indeed commendable. We thank its Chairperson, Ambassador Yukio Takasu, for his able stewardship. We are pleased that the Commission's working method has been further consolidated. The Chairs of the country-specific configurations have also played important roles in their contributions to the Commission's work. We commend Sierra Leone, Burundi and Guinea-Bissau for their cooperation and for taking national ownership of the Peacebuilding Commission initiative. We wish similar success to the Central African Republic.

The Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund have also played catalytic roles in our shared objectives. We hope that the recent restructuring of the Office will result in greater efficiency and improved servicing for all the Commission configurations.

The disbursements of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund and other funds should be rapid and immediate to ensure early stabilization of countries in the peacebuilding process. That is required to support national and local authorities in delivering a peace dividend. In that regard, we may remind ourselves that one of the main purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission is to marshal resources for reconstruction and institution-building in countries emerging from conflict.

Therefore, the Commission should play a central role in any discussion regarding the creation of the new rapid funding mechanism. We feel that members of the Commission should be more frequently updated on the operations of the Peacebuilding Fund, and information on disbursements should be shared with them. The relationship between the Commission and the Fund and their individual roles have to be made clear to the stakeholders on the ground in order to dispel the ambiguity about eligibility for Fund support. We are heartened by the fact that the Fund has exceeded the $250 million target. This is testimony to the continued commitment of the international community to the goal of peacebuilding.

As we all agree, the multidimensional areas of peacekeeping and peacebuilding require a certain expertise. However, as we may recall from the discussion in the meetings of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the idea of civilian observers is still not agreed upon. We are not in favour of the creation of any type of cadre or pool comprising United Nations staff for rapid civilian deployment. We believe that filling the vacant posts in field missions and country offices by personnel recruited from Member States and host countries, in both military and civilian categories, can better serve that purpose.

On the question of relation between such United Nations capacities and national capacities, we would like to emphasize that national ownership of the peacebuilding process is a fundamental prerequisite. We emphasize ever-greater ownership by the respective Governments of the countries on the agenda. In our perspective, national ownership is the key to sustaining progress and preventing the country in question from relapsing into conflict. It is indeed a shared moral obligation to be vigilant about the special needs of countries emerging from conflict and stepping towards recovery, reintegration and reconstruction.

As one of the largest troop-contributing countries, Bangladesh is actively engaged in United Nations peacekeeping activities. As a developing country, we have experienced home-grown ideas like microcredit and women's non-formal education, which we believe can work miracles in economic advancement and women's empowerment. Bangladeshi peacekeepers have to some extent transferred that development philosophy to the countries of their deployment, and as a member of the Peacebuilding Commission, Bangladesh fully supports integrating those concepts into the economic recovery and development dimensions of the peacebuilding process. To begin with, we could focus on youth development, employment generation and women's employment in consolidating the initial gains of peace.

We pledge our continued support to the Organization's peacebuilding goals. We would like to reiterate that the Peacebuilding Commission should have the central role in post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts. The Commission should act as a spearhead for a coordinated, coherent and integrated peacebuilding architecture.

My delegation is of the view that the operational relations of the Peacebuilding Commission with the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council and other intergovernmental United Nations bodies and relevant stakeholders should be further strengthened. We urge the members of the Security Council to extend their full support to the Commission, so that it may fully function as a competent advisory body to address post-conflict situations. The international community should assist the Commission in fulfilling its mandate in all possible ways.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Mr. Wetland (Norway): It is my pleasure to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and Norway. Allow me initially to express our profound gratitude to Ambassador Takasu of Japan for his continued leadership and the lucid remarks that he made at the launch of our discussions here today.

Let me also say how pleased we are to see the new Assistant Secretary-General of the Peacebuilding Support Office, Ms. Jane Holl Lute, here among us. We have absolutely no doubt about the professional

experience that she brings to this format, to this room, and we will be working with her to make the Peacebuilding Support Office an even more successful part of United Nations activities. Best of luck to her from all of us.

With the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission we have started to fill the previous gap in our institutional ability to help countries in the transition from war to lasting peace. While we have seen considerable progress during the lifespan of the Commission — I believe it was the Ambassador of Indonesia who used the term "infancy" here today, that the Peacebuilding Commission is in its infancy — we believe that some factors need increased emphasis. I will address three of them here today.

First, we still have a way to go to ensure effective coordination within the United Nations and with other partners. One main purpose of the Peacebuilding Commission is to bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery.

After two years of gaining experience, we must stay focused on enhancing cooperation with the international financial institutions, especially the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as well as with other, regional organizations. The Peacebuilding Commission should be given a more central role in ensuring that the international community is a more reliable partner to Governments in post-conflict situations. The role of neighbouring countries is also essential. In the case of Burundi, we wish to commend in particular the Regional Peace Initiative for Burundi and the South African Facilitation for their indispensable role in support of a durable peace in Burundi.

Secondly, we must recognize that peacebuilding is part of our core agenda, and not a subsequent phase or a subsidiary activity to peacekeeping operations. Peacebuilding should be a central component for the beginning of the transition from war to lasting peace, and that must be recognized at all levels. It will require constant political attention, on the part of the Security Council and, indeed, the Secretary-General.

We therefore emphasize the practice of inviting Peacebuilding Commission Chairs to brief the Council on a regular basis, as well as opportunities for briefings by the Assistant Secretary-General of the Peacebuilding Support Office to the Security Council. Peacebuilding means addressing the most critical areas of nation-building, and that may entail slow progress and setbacks at times. But we must never waiver in that undertaking. It is all about instilling hope and showing the promise of a new beginning.

Thirdly, peacebuilding will not happen unless there is genuine national ownership. That is why continued resource mobilization and early capacity-building is key. We must never forget that the populations of post-conflict countries are normally found among the bottom billion. The fight against poverty remains one of the essential reasons why peacebuilding is crucial. It is crucial, therefore, that commitments are implemented, and that applies also to the national institutions and authorities themselves. But peacebuilding is a partnership, and the international community must shoulder its responsibility.

It is crucial that the Peacebuilding Commission continues the search for an appropriate working format. For that reason, the Peacebuilding Support Office should strengthen its focus on strategic planning and should be entrusted with utilizing the capacities of the United Nations as a whole. The success of the Peacebuilding Commission rests on the extent to which it can target sectors that fall outside the coverage of other funding institutions and contribute to early and tangible results on the ground.

Peacebuilding can become a success story for the United Nations. But even more importantly, it could be the path to political stability and development and a life in dignity for millions living in post-conflict countries. As such, it is a real opportunity, but also a challenge, and as such, it must continue to be a priority concern for the Security Council.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12:50 p.m.